



# News Release

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## Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition Reform Holds Town Meeting for Businesses



**Mr. Stan Soloway discusses issues of interest to business and industry.**

Mr. Stan Soloway the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition Reform held a Town Meeting for business and industry at the SPAWAR Systems Center San Diego Conference Center. Government and Industry representatives joined in the discussion and question and answer sessions.

The Space & Naval Warfare Systems Command hosted the Town Meeting designed to improve communication among the government and industry acquisition and business team.

Mr. Soloway addressed issues of concern to small & medium sized businesses, the new relationships between large and small businesses and the acquisition reform processes underway in the Defense Department and Federal government.

The Under Secretary talked about initiatives such as contracts with 48 percent small business participation requirements instead of goals. He cited the recent case of the base support services contract for Kelly Air Force Base, Texas - which is closing as a result of the Base Closure and Realignment process and the excellent way that the prime contractor went to work to achieve that requirement.



**The Town Hall Business Meeting was very well attended by more than 100 people.**

He praised the acquisition reform improvements such as better post award debriefings - something he said has cut the Federal Acquisition Regulation challenges tremendously. Soloway said that in the early 1990s, more than 60 percent of the contract awards that were challenged by the companies which did not receive the contract were voluntarily withdrawn after they used the FAR process to get information about why they did not win the contract.

Today, there are significantly fewer challenges to contract awards, Soloway said, because the debriefing process does a very good job of explaining to businesses the rationale for the decision-making process and the methodology for selection. The company's representatives understand why they did not get the award and what they need to do differently next time. The challenges to awards that are written are much better prepared, Soloway added.

Businesses understand the process and requirements much better than before when our relationship was more adversarial.

One significant change to the way that the Defense Department does acquisition, Soloway said, is in the procurement of commercial systems where the government has not funded the research and development process.

Years ago, the Defense Department led the way in computer development and communication systems, he said. The Internet, computer technology and small, mobile communication systems were examples cited by the Under Secretary as examples of Government leading industry. DoD demanded all of the technical information on systems purchased because we'd paid for that information and we had troops deployed around the world who needed that information to maintain the systems.



**RDML Ken Slaght opens the Business and Industry Town Meeting.**

Today, the top 80 high-tech companies involved with computers, communications and associated systems have a combined information technology research and development budget larger than the entire research and development budget of the Defense Department. And when compared to the IT budget of the Defense Department, industry's R&D budget is larger by a factor of three or four Soloway said.

RDML Ken Slaght, SPAWAR Vice Commander and Chief Engineer, opened the conference and welcomed the large group of people representing small business, large business and government acquisition team members. He briefly discussed the new world of acquisition and teaming with the government in contracting.

Prior to the conference, Mr. Scott Randall, SPAWAR's Director for the Global Information and Network Systems Program Directorate (PD-15), briefed Mr. Soloway on the Navy Wide Intranet initiative and new approaches to networking information systems using commercial capabilities.

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